

VLR-5/20/80 NRHP-7/30/80

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

River Bluff

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Route 151

CITY, TOWN

Wintergreen

 VICINITY OF

--NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Seventh (J. Kenneth Robinson)

STATE

Virginia

CODE

51

COUNTY

Nelson

CODE

125

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

 DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

 IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

 OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

 YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO

## PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Southard, Jr.

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Post Office Box 71

CITY, TOWN

Lovingson

 VICINITY OF

STATE

VA 22949

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Albemarle County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Charlottesville

STATE

Virginia

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey

DATE

1979, 1980

 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 221 Governor Street

CITY, TOWN

Richmond

STATE

Virginia 23219

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

## CHECK ONE

## CHECK ONE

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

River Bluff, Nelson County, is positioned on a steep bank overlooking the South Fork of the Rockfish River and is dramatically sited at the base of the mountains of the George Washington National Forest. The house is a three-part composition consisting of a two-story central pavilion with one-story flanking wings. Although River Bluff is symmetrically organized, certain details give evidence that the house was built in two stages. The main block is the core of the dwelling and was constructed ca. 1785. River Bluff probably achieved its final form by ca. 1805.

While the entire structure is laid in Flemish bond, the brick of the wings does not match that of the center pavilion in color or glazing pattern; and the wings are not bonded into the main block. The doors into the center block and west wing are not original but have been cut in. The curious asymmetrical fenestration pattern of the main block's south elevation also reveals significant changes in orientation. In plan River Bluff was originally a side-passage, one-room dwelling. This two-story core was transformed into a Palladian structure when one-story wings were attached at its east and west elevations. At that time the opposed side-passage doors became the doors into the one-room east and west wings. River Bluff's orientation was changed from east to south, and a new facade entrance was opened in the southern gable end of the center block.

The brick face is in stable condition although crudely patched areas, especially in the west wing's north wall and the east wing's east wall, indicate where openings have been closed and cracks sealed. A photograph taken by a WPA surveyor in 1938 shows there was no porch across the facade; therefore, the present porch was constructed after this date. Judging from the weathered brick and lack of rodded joints on the portion of the main block's east and west walls visible in the attic over the wings, it appears likely that small porches once sheltered the original openings. End boards terminate the wooden cornice of both the main block and wings. Rake boards mark the lines of all gable ends. Exterior end chimneys are positioned in the gable ends of the wings and in the north wall of the center block. While all chimney caps were probably corbeled, only the east wing chimney cap remains intact. This chimney is further distinguished and embellished by its diapered brickwork. All chimneys feature a single set of tiled weatherings. Most windows have 9/9 sash. The exceptions are the central block's attic windows, the second-floor hall window, and the new window in the chimney wall of the east wing. Additional moldings have been installed in all 9/9 windows to allow replacement with smaller sash. Corners and window joints are defined by queen closers, and jack arches are found above all openings. All jack arches are carefully executed with the exception of those above the later doors of the central block and the west wing. Remaining paint reveals that thin white lines were painted on the voussoirs to give the appearance of gauged brick. A line of racking to the left of the west wing door indicates that an addition of some kind may have been planned. Several basement openings retain grills in their pegged frames. River Bluff is underpinned by a rubble stone foundation which shifts to brick for the final few top courses. The foundation has been stuccoed. The cellar can be entered from the exterior by opposed openings in the center block at the north and south elevations.

The main block contains the entrance hall and parlor beyond and a single chamber on the second floor; the wings are single chambers. Interior details are executed simply. All interior walls have been plastered and painted, and evidence of wallpaper has been found. The floors are not original; there have been at least three floors in the wings and the last has been painted. The parlor was altered when part of it was enclosed for use as a bath. The bath has been removed recently. The Federal parlor mantel is the most ornate of the three remaining mantels, although in detail it is quite plain. The

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      ca. 1785,    ca. 1805      BUILDER/ARCHITECT    unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

River Bluff is a handsomely proportioned farmhouse whose form was derived from plans popularized by 18th-century English patternbooks. The three-part dwelling, which was constructed in two stages, represents the influence of Palladian forms on Virginia vernacular architecture. Begun ca. 1785, the original side-passage, one-room house was transformed into the core of a Palladian composition ca. 1805. However, the mental process by which it arrived at this form is as significant as the form itself. Through its transformation from a small rectangular dwelling to a stylish, if simplified, Palladian type, River Bluff illustrates changing 18th-century concepts of popular and acceptable housing which retained the Georgian ideal of order, symmetry and regularity. In contrast to the purer, more elaborate expressions of Palladian forms found in such houses as Brandon, Battersea and nearby Bon Aire, River Bluff exemplifies how sophisticated models are susceptible to a local builder's interpretation. This three- and five-part arrangement is a house type which was diffused from the Tidewater area into Piedmont Virginia. River Bluff and its setting have changed little since the early 19th century. The house is enhanced by its dramatic siting at the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

River Bluff stands on a tract of land owned by Alexander Reid, Jr., until 1779, when he sold it to Nathaniel Clarke. While the exact building date cannot be determined, the plan and architectural details indicate that the center block of River Bluff was built ca. 1785. Reid may have built the center section just before he sold the property; more likely Clarke had it constructed while he owned it. Clarke sold two adjacent parcels of land, 360 acres in 1787 and 100 acres in 1789, to Thomas Goodwin. River Bluff probably stood on the 360-acre tract. In 1789 Goodwin lived in Caroline County, but he had moved to Amherst County (now Nelson) by 1793 when he is listed in the county's personal property tax books. Judging by Goodwin's large family and the property's valuation, it appears he was responsible for enlarging River Bluff by ca. 1810. Goodwin's heirs owned the property until 1876, when it was sold to Dr. Hawes Coleman. Arthur T. Ewing the man responsible for naming the property, acquired it from Goodwin's heirs in 1897. Haldane Ewing purchased River Bluff from A. T. Ewing's heirs in 1947. The Waynesboro Nursery bought the property in 1954. The next owners, Mr. and Mrs. Francis Berkeley, sold River Bluff to Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Southard in 1979. They presently are rehabilitating River Bluff for use as a residence.

MEH/MTP

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Amherst County Deed Books D (1774), E (1779), F (1787) G, (1787), K (1804) .  
Land Tax Books 1782-1808.  
Personal Property Tax Books, 1782-1808.  
 Nelson County Deed Books 12, 19.  
Land Tax Books 1809-1850.  
Personal Property Tax Books, 1815.  
Will Books E, F, G. (See Continuation Sheet #1)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 12 acres  
 QUADRANGLE NAME Sherando, Va. QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,7	6,8,4,0,5,0	4,1,9,4,4,4,0	B	1,7	6,8,4,3,4,0	4,1,9,4,0,0,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1,7	6,8,3,6,0,0	4,1,9,4,2,2,0	D	1,7	6,8,3,6,7,0	4,1,9,4,5,1,0
E				F			
G				H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Beginning at a point on W side of State Route 151, 2600' SSW of intersection of said route and State Route 627, 1850' W of Reeds Creek; thence extending 400' SSW along said side of said route 151; thence extending 1350' SW; thence extending approximately 1000' NNE to private drive; thence extending 800' SE along N side of said

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES  
 (See Continuation Sheet #2)

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff  
 ORGANIZATION Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission DATE May 1980  
 STREET & NUMBER 221 Governor Street TELEPHONE (804) 786-3144  
 CITY OR TOWN Richmond STATE Virginia 23219

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:  
 NATIONAL      STATE X LOCAL     

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE [Signature]  
 TITLE Tucker Hill, Executive Director DATE MAY 20 1980  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
	DATE
ATTEST: KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	DATE
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION	

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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River Bluff, Nelson County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET #1

ITEM NUMBER 7 & 9 PAGE 1

### 7. DESCRIPTION

entablature blocks and central tablet are carved with fluted elliptical paterae, and the whole is topped by a denticulated shelf. A baseboard and chair rail with a molded cap, identical to that found in the entrance hall and second-story rooms, surround the room. The parlor floor also has been painted. In the hall additional moldings partially have closed the original openings to allow smaller interior doors. An open-string stair provides access to the upper floor. Its diagonally set square balusters are placed two to a tread, and it has a square newel. The large, well-proportioned, second-floor room features a tall mantel which has a shallow shelf and four raised panels.

The window moldings, baseboard and chair rail found in the wings are identical in detail. The west wing had been used as a kitchen, and its hearth opening was closed. Recently the hearth was opened, and the linoleum flooring was removed. The east wing mantel is undistinguished and is a replacement.

Like most 18th-century Virginia houses, River Bluff's three-room basement has a dirt floor. A fireplace has been cut into the massive stone foundation in the center room, probably for use as a winter kitchen.

A boxed, winder stair leads from the second-floor landing into the attic over the center block. The roofing system for all three sections is common rafter. The rafters are strengthened by diagonal braces. In the main block the braces are lapped over the bottom of the rafters; they are lapped through the back of the rafters in both wings.

No associated outbuildings are standing. The WPA report states that the dependencies were in poor condition but were standing. The current owners relate that the outbuilding ruins were bulldozed into the river below when the Waynesboro Nursery acquired the property. Archaeological investigation is under way to determine the original locations of the outbuildings. A brick and stone walk, which apparently leads between the house and dependencies, has been excavated partially. River Bluff currently is being rehabilitated for use as a private residence.

MEH

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The bounds for River Bluff have been drawn to include the house and a small portion of surrounding acreage. A total of 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  acres is included in the nomination.

### 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Richmond, Virginia. Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Archives. River Bluff file.  
U.S. Census. 1785, 1810, 1820, 1850.

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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River Bluff, Nelson County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET #2

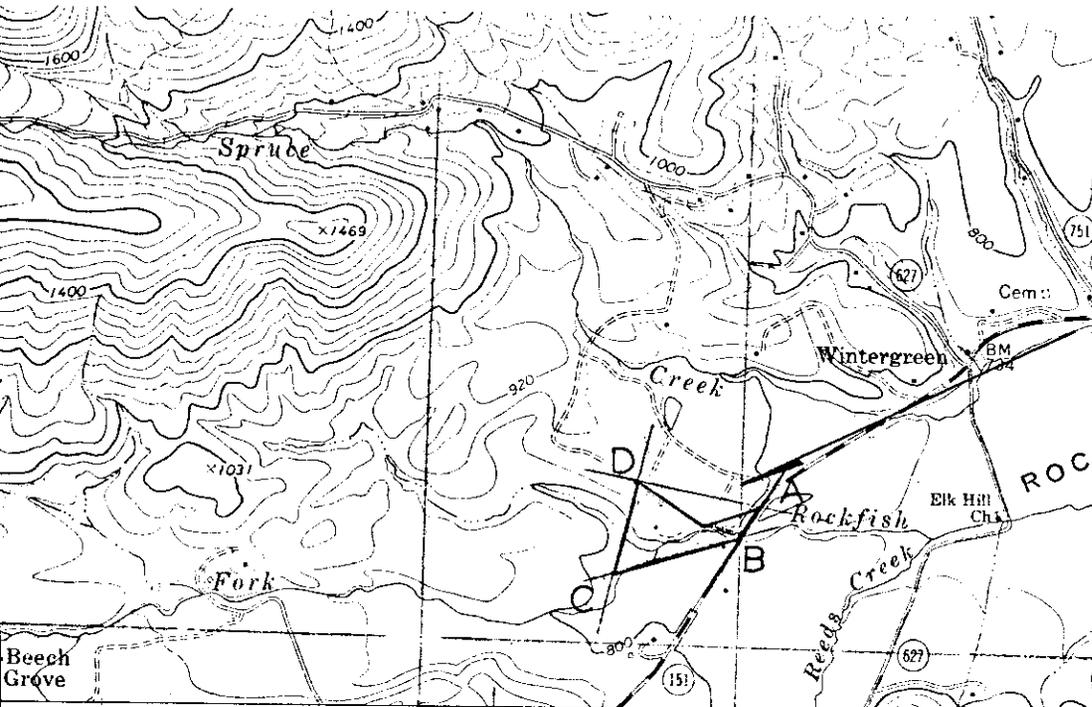
ITEM NUMBER 10

PAGE 1

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION (continued)

drive; thence turning N and extending 600' to point of origin.



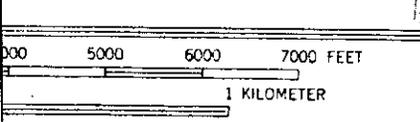
USGS 7.5' quadrangle  
 Sherando, VA  
 Scale 1:24000  
 1967

RIVER BLUFF, Nelson County, VA

UTM References:  
 A-17/684050/4194440    B-17/684340/4194000  
 C-17/683600/4194220    D-17/683670/4194510

AINJ 682 683 55' 1 880 000 FEET (NORTH)  
 BRYANT 6 MI  
 20 MI. TO U.S. 29

685 686000m E 37°52'30"  
 INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C.—1970  
 78°52'30"

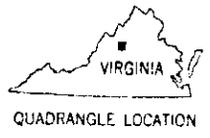


ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, all weather, hard surface \_\_\_\_\_  
 Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface \_\_\_\_\_  
 Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface \_\_\_\_\_  
 Unimproved road, fair or dry weather \_\_\_\_\_

○ State Route

0 FEET  
 DOT CONTOURS  
 LEVEL



ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
 CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903  
 MBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

SHERANDO, VA.

NW/4 LOVINGSTON 15' QUADRANGLE  
 N3752.5—W7852.5/7.5

1967

AMS 5259 IV NW—SERIES V834

EEENFIELD 321  
 MI. TO U.S. 250

(LOVINGSTON)  
 5259 IV SE